

Abstract: Everett Gibson

“True Story of the Moon Rock Heist”

In 2002, three NASA Co-op students along with a colleague from the University of Utah stole lunar samples from the Johnson Space Center. Three members of the “gang” removed a 600 pound safe containing lunar, meteorite and Martian samples from Dr. Gibson’s laboratory. The thieves offered the samples for sale using the internet. They were arrested by undercover FBI and OIG agents. Three guilty pleas along with a conviction yielded sentences as long as 90 months in federal prison.

Two of the thieves went to federal prison and have now been released. One of the thieves told his story to the popular author Ben Mezrich who released the book “Sex on the Moon” in July. Hollywood has “picked-up” the rights to their caper. The stolen lunar samples were not “trash”. The loss of 30 years of Dr. Gibson’s research records occurred along with contaminating and breaking the chain-of-custody for the lunar samples. The ring-leader has displayed no remorse for his crimes and is currently on the motivational speaker’s lecture circuit.

Investigators commented “they were the gang, who may have had the highest IQ but the least common sense in history.” Previous unreleased information about the crime will be discussed by Dr. Gibson along with information about the forthcoming National Geographic Society’s television special on the crime.